



Multistate Conservation Grant Program
Performance Period: January 1st, 2023 – December 31st, 2023

Background and General Information

Authority

The Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 777 et seq.) and the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.), as amended by the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-408, 114 STAT. 1766 §113 and 114 STAT. 1722 §122) authorize the Secretary of the Interior to make up to \$6,000,000 available annually under the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) to fund multistate conservation project grants. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will cite this traditional program as the T-MSCGP.

In addition to the traditionally \$6,000,000 available funding (\$3,000,000 for Wildlife Restoration and \$3,000,000 for Sportsfish Restoration), the President signed the Modernizing the Pittman-Robertson Fund for Tomorrow's Needs Act (Modernizing PR Act) (Public Law (Pub. L.) 116-94) into law on December 20, 2019. This law, among other measures, created a new "Modern Multistate Conservation Grant Program" designed to support "R3" projects for hunting and shooting sports. The Service will cite this as the "Modern Multistate Conservation Grant Program (R3-MSCGP)." The R3-MSCGP will make up to an additional \$5,000,000 available specifically for hunter and recreational shooter recruitment related grants, including related communication and outreach activities.

Background, Purpose and Program Requirements

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (Association) and the Service work cooperatively to manage T-MSGCP and R3-MSGCP ("R3 MSCGP"). Administratively, both programs will function similarly to recent administration of the T-MSCGP. The Association manages the grant application process, providing oversight, coordination, and guidance. The Service awards and manages the grants. Both programs are competitive grant programs.

The primary goal of both programs is to fund projects that address regional or national priority needs of the State fish and wildlife agencies (States) and their partners that are beyond the scope and capabilities of a single State. Eligible grant proposals are reviewed by the Association's National Grants Committee (NGC) with the assistance of one or more technical committees. Proposals must address eligible activities in one or more of the Association's selected Strategic Priorities to be considered. Strategic Conservation Priorities are developed annually by the Association and are used to guide proposal development and grant selection for the program.

Projects awarded under T-MSCGP may use the funds for sport fisheries and wildlife management and research projects, boating access development, hunter safety and education, aquatic education, aquatic

R3 programs, fish and wildlife habitat improvements, and other purposes consistent with the enabling legislation.

Recipients awarded under the R3-MSCGP can only use the funds for making hunter recruitment and recreational shooter recruitment projects that promote a national hunting and shooting sport recruitment program, including related communication and outreach activities.

Wildlife TRACS (Tracking and Reporting Actions for the Conservation of Species) is the tracking and reporting system used by WSFR to capture conservation and related actions funded by its grant programs. TRACS serves as the electronic repository system for all performance and accomplishment reporting related to those Federal awards administered by the WSFR program. TRACS highlights program accountability by documenting program accomplishments and results-oriented accountability. Grant and project statement information and performance reporting data must be entered into TRACS, as authorized under [2 CFR 200.102\(c\)](#), [200.202](#), [200.301](#), and [200.329](#).

Grant awards issued under this program typically include projects for biological research, training, species population status assessment, fish and wildlife conservation outreach, data collection regarding hunter and angler participation, hunter and aquatic education, assessing the economic value of fishing and hunting, and regional or multistate habitat needs assessments. Many of the projects that will be conducted under these types of projects either directly or indirectly support Executive Order 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad. For example, regional or habitat needs assessments will support climate resilience, land conservation, and biodiversity efforts, including the 30 x 30 initiative.

Total Funding

Estimated Funding for T-MSCGP: Up to \$6,000,000.

Estimated Funding for R3-MSCGP: Up to \$5,000,000.

Estimated Total Funding: Up to \$11,000,000 for T-MSCGP and R3-MSCGP awards combined.

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

Only eligible grant proposals will be considered for funding so please ensure that you meet the following eligibility requirements:

- 1. Organization Information.** Please indicate the appropriate classification of your organization. If you are a Nonprofit, please indicate the type:
Applicant Classification:
 - a. 12 – Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
 - b. 13 – Nonprofits without 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
 - c. 00 – State governments
 - d. 06 – Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
 - e. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service, or a State or group of States, for the purpose of carrying out the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. The State governments' designation refers to Agencies with lead management responsibility for fish and wildlife resources in each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia (Sport Fish Restoration only), Commonwealths of Puerto Rico and the Northern Mariana Islands, and the territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, or a group of these agencies.

2. **State Benefit Requirement:** Projects must benefit:
 - At least 26 States,
 - A majority (over 50%) of the States in a [U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Region](#)
 - A majority (over 50%) of States in a Regional Association of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies ([WAFWA](#), [MAFWA](#), [NEAFWA](#), [SEAFWA](#)).
3. **Strategic Priorities Addressed:** An applicant’s Initial Proposal must address at least one of the current MSCGP Strategic Priorities (reviewed and updated annually).

FY 2023 Strategic Priorities for the MSCGP

1. Conservation & Science

- A. Large Landscape Systems & Species
- B. Climate
- C. Wildlife Disease Including Connections with Human Health (“One Health”)
- D. Data
- E. Human Dimensions & Social Science
- F. Invasive Species

2. Relevancy & Inclusion & Participation

- A. Enhancing Conservation Through Broader Engagement
- B. Communication Programs that Further Regional & National Conservation Efforts
- C. Implementing and/or Expanding Internal and External Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Efforts

3. Coordination, Capacity Building & Fish and Wildlife Agencies Support

- A. Leadership Development
- B. Conservation Education
- C. Coordination of International, National & Regional Conservation Efforts & Policies
- D. Integration of Law Enforcement

4. Trust Fund Stewardship

- A. Research that Informs & Supports Conservation Efforts
- B. Trust Fund Education & Promotion of North American Model of Conservation (“Legal Strategy”)
- C. Conservation Law Education

5. AFWA Priorities Identified in AFWA Funding Principles (submitted by ExCom)

- A. Management Assistance Team
- B. Management of MSCGP Program
- C. CITES and International Conservation Programs and Their Impact of State Agencies
- D. Coordination of Conservation on National Scale

6. Recruitment, Retention, Reactivation (R3)*

a.

*The category was recently developed in response to the Pittman Roberson Modernization Act and includes up to an additional \$5 million for R3 projects focused specifically on hunting and shooting sports (i.e. recreational target shooting). Potential projects under sections (6a – 6e) of this priority should be broad in scope and far-reaching. Collaboration between new and existing partners such as industry, NGO's and state agencies is encouraged. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion can refer to racial diversity. Proposals should include a detailed monitoring and evaluation plan. The Association is also requesting R3 projects focused on fishing through this category although they will be funded through the Traditional MSCGP program using available Sport Fish Restoration funding.

Monitoring and Evaluation (Wildlife Restoration Only)

Description: Development of tools, trainings and technologies that allow R3 practitioners to document the influence of R3 effort implementation on the target participants' or populations' initiation into and/or increased avidity in hunting and/or recreational target shooting.

Potential projects might include: Development of tools to support data collection methodologies, data dashboards, and resources that increase R3 staff competency and capacity to evaluate, manage, and interpret data in order to benefit decision making. Creation of R3 effort outcome indicators measurement and collection systems that allow participant and license sales data to be summarized and compared at regional or national scales.

b. **Marketing**

Description: Identification, development and implementation of strategic marketing tools and resources (with defined and measurable R3 outcomes) intended to 1) maximize social support for (from increasing broad societal awareness and acceptance, to connecting prospects with opportunities) and to 2) increase participation in hunting and/or recreational target shooting. *Projects will also be considered for fishing participation under this category using funds from the Traditional MSCGP.*

Potential Projects might include: Market research; best marketing practices; development of marketing toolkits; strategies to form regional or national marketing campaigns; or increase community-wide engagement and implementation of marketing tactics.

c. **Mentoring**

Description: Identification and evaluation of elements of successful mentoring programs as well as current mentor/mentee motivations and application of that knowledge to expand and promote effective mentoring or instructional efforts from the current base of hunting and/or recreational target shooting participants. *Projects will also be considered for fishing participation under this category using funds from the Traditional MSCGP.*

Potential projects might include: Development of program guidance to increase effectiveness, capacity, scalability, and collaboration of partners; efforts to increase involvement and marketing to current participants to become mentors; efforts to increase

understanding and engagement of potential mentees; and efforts to facilitate effective brokering of mentoring or instructional experiences within populations of mentors/instructors and prospective mentees/students.

d. Engaging New Audiences

Description: Assist organizations and R3 efforts with targeting new or underserved audiences by further defining likely new and efficient audiences, and then identifying effective pathways and tools to create targeted R3 efforts to engage those new and diverse audiences. Proposals focused specifically on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives are encouraged.

Potential projects might include: Development of tools to increase the effectiveness of targeted R3 efforts; evaluation of adoption and effectiveness of existing toolkits; research projects to understand potential target audiences; development of additional toolkits or trainings to increase organizations' effectiveness and capacity in retaining new hunting and target shooting participants. *Projects will also be considered for fishing participation under this category using funds from the Traditional MSCGP.*

e. R3 Capacity and Infrastructure

Description: Assist the R3 community in increasing capacity and infrastructure to address regional and national R3 threats and barriers; and provide for the unification of strategic and effective R3 efforts by state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, NGO and industry partners to yield measurable outcomes.

Potential projects might include: Development of resources to help organizations improve effectiveness in R3 efforts; projects that increase partners' (industry, NGO, regional associations, etc.) capacity to work on collaborative R3 efforts; development of tools that foster effective communication, planning, coordination, and networking at all levels on R3 efforts; facilitation of strategic efforts to unify the R3 community in its pursuits.

The Association judges every proposal on its merits and how well it addresses one or more of the Association's Strategic Priorities.